

## CLAIMS

1           1.     A method in a computer system for delivering advertising to a user, the method  
2 comprising:  
3           identifying the user;  
4           selecting at least one character for the user;  
5           selecting a message to be delivered by said at least one character to the user;  
6           selecting an advertisement from a plurality of advertisements;  
7           integrating said selected advertisement with said selected message to be delivered by  
8 said at least one character; and  
9           presenting said at least one character to the user wherein said at least one character  
0 conveys said selected message integrated with said selected advertisement.

1           2.     The method of claim 1 wherein said integrating step comprises the step of  
2 adding words of said selected advertisement to words of said selected message.

1           3.     The method of claim 1 wherein said integrating step comprises the step of  
2 providing a background image for presenting said at least one character.

1           4.     The method of claim 1 wherein said selecting an advertisement step comprises  
2 the step of basing said selecting of said advertisement on at least one characteristic of the  
3 user.

1           5.     The method of claim 1 wherein said selecting an advertisement step comprises  
2 the step of basing said selecting of said advertisement on at least one characteristic of said at  
3 least one character.

1           6.     The method of claim 1 wherein said selecting an advertisement step comprises  
2 the step of basing said selecting of said advertisement on at least one previous conversation  
3 between said at least one character and the user.

1           7.     The method of claim 1 wherein said selecting an advertisement step comprises  
2 selecting said advertisement randomly.

1           8.     The method of claim 1 wherein said selected message is delivered in a  
2 language that is selected based on at least one characteristic of the user.

1           9.     The method of claim 1 wherein at least two advertisements are selected and  
2 integrated into said selected message.

1           10.    The method of claim 1 wherein said delivery of said selected message as  
2 displayed text or audio output is based on at least one characteristic of the user.

1           11.    The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one character is presented only as  
2 audio output.

1           12.    The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one character is presented via a  
2 wireless device.

1           13.    The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one character is presented via a  
2 telephone.

1           14.    The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one character is a rendered  
2 character that is one of a cartoon character, a person, an animal, and a non-living object.

1           15.    The method of claim 1 wherein the computer system is a gaming device.

1           16.    The method of claim 1 wherein said presenting step comprises the step of  
2 sending said at least one character to convey said selected message integrated with said  
3 selected advertisement from a server computer to a user computer via a communication link.

1           17.    The method of claim 1 wherein said presenting step comprises the step of  
2 displaying an image of said at least one character.

1           18.    The method of claim 1 wherein said selected message is delivered as displayed  
2 text.

1           19.    The method of claim 18 wherein said displayed text is shown in a bubble near  
2 the displayed image of said at least one character.

1           20.    The method of claim 1 wherein said selected message is delivered as audio  
2 output.

1           21.    The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one character presented delivers  
2 said selected message during a conversation.

1           22.    The method of claim 21 wherein said conversation is with at least two of said  
2 at least one character.

1           23.    The method of claim 21 wherein said conversation is with the user.

1           24.    The method of claim 21 wherein the user participates interactively in said  
2 conversation with said at least one character.

1           25.    The method of claim 1 wherein said selecting an advertisement step comprises  
2 the step of basing said selecting of said advertisement on at least one advertising  
3 requirement.

1           26.    The method of claim 25 wherein said at least one advertising requirement is to  
2 present said selected advertisement during a certain percentage of user sessions.

1           27.    The method of claim 25 wherein said advertising requirement is to present  
2    said selected advertisement at a certain frequency.

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1           28.    A method in a computer system for delivering advertising to a user, the method  
2 comprising:

3           selecting a message to be delivered by at least one character to the user;

4           selecting an advertisement from a plurality of advertisements;

5           integrating said selected advertisement with said selected message; and

6           presenting said at least one character to the user wherein said at least one character  
7 conveys said selected message integrated with said selected advertisement.

1           29.    The method of claim 28 wherein said message is selected during a  
2 conversation in which said at least one character is engaged.

1           30.    The method of claim 28 wherein said advertisement is selected when said at  
2 least one character is presented to the user.

1           31.    The method of claim 28 wherein said advertisement is dynamically selected.

1           32.    The method of claim 28 wherein said integrating step comprises the step of  
2 adding words of said selected advertisement to words of said selected message.

1           33.    The method of claim 28 wherein said integrating step comprises the step of  
2 providing a background image for presenting said at least one character.

1           34.    The method of claim 28 wherein said selecting an advertisement step  
2 comprises the step of basing said selecting of said advertisement on at least one characteristic  
3 of the user.

1           35.    The method of claim 28 wherein said selecting an advertisement step  
2 comprises the step of basing said selecting of said advertisement on at least one characteristic  
3 of said at least one character.

1           36. The method of claim 28 wherein said selecting an advertisement step  
2 comprises the step of basing said selecting of said advertisement on at least one previous  
3 conversation between said at least one character and the user.

1           37. The method of claim 28 wherein said selecting an advertisement step  
2 comprises selecting said advertisement randomly.

1           38. The method of claim 28 wherein said selected message is delivered in a  
2 language that is selected based on at least one characteristic of the user.

1           39. The method of claim 28 wherein at least two advertisements are selected and  
2 integrated into said selected message.

1           40. The method of claim 28 wherein said delivery of said selected message as  
2 displayed text or audio output is based on at least one characteristic of the user.

1           41. The method of claim 28 wherein said at least one character is presented only as  
2 audio output.

1           42. The method of claim 28 wherein said at least one character is presented via a  
2 wireless device.

1           43. The method of claim 28 wherein said at least one character is presented via a  
2 telephone.

1           44. The method of claim 28 wherein said at least one character is a rendered  
2 character that is one of a cartoon character, a person, an animal, and a non-living object.

1           45. The method of claim 28 wherein the computer system is a gaming device.

1           46.    The method of claim 28 wherein said presenting step comprises the step of  
2    sending said at least one character to convey said selected message integrated with said  
3    selected advertisement from a server computer to a user computer via a communication link.

1           47.    The method of claim 28 wherein said presenting step comprises the step of  
2    displaying an image of said at least one character.

1           48.    The method of claim 28 wherein said selected message is delivered as  
2    displayed text.

1           49.    The method of claim 48 wherein said displayed text is shown in a bubble near  
2    the displayed image of said at least one character.

1           50.    The method of claim 28 wherein said selected message is delivered as audio  
2    output.

1           51.    The method of claim 28 wherein said at least one character presented delivers  
2    said selected message during a conversation.

1           52.    The method of claim 51 wherein said conversation is with at least two of said  
2    at least one character.

1           53.    The method of claim 51 wherein said conversation is with the user.

1           54.    The method of claim 51 wherein the user participates interactively in said  
2    conversation with said at least one character.

1           55.    The method of claim 28 wherein said selecting an advertisement step  
2    comprises the step of basing said selecting of said advertisement on at least one advertising  
3    requirement.

1           56.     The method of claim 55 wherein said at least one advertising requirement is to  
2     present said selected advertisement during a certain percentage of user sessions.

1            57. The method of claim 55 wherein said advertising requirement is to present  
2      said selected advertisement at a certain frequency.

[illegible]

1           58. A method in a computer system for advertising during presentation of at least  
2 one character engaged in a conversation, the conversation including a series of messages, the  
3 method comprising:

4           during the conversation when the series of messages is to be delivered by the at least  
5 one character, selecting an advertisement from a plurality of advertisements;

6           integrating said selected advertisement into said series of messages; and

7           controlling the delivery of said series of messages integrated with said selected  
8 advertisement by the at least one character.

1           59. The method of claim 58 wherein said advertisement is dynamically selected.

1           60. The method of claim 58 wherein said integrating step comprises the step of  
2 adding words of said selected advertisement to words of the series of messages .

1           61. The method of claim 58 wherein said integrating step comprises the step of  
2 providing a background image for presenting the at least one character.

1           62. The method of claim 58 wherein said selecting an advertisement step  
2 comprises the step of basing said selecting of said advertisement on at least one characteristic  
3 of the user.

1           63. The method of claim 58 wherein said selecting an advertisement step  
2 comprises the step of basing said selecting of said advertisement on at least one characteristic  
3 of the at least one character.

1           64. The method of claim 58 wherein said selecting an advertisement step  
2 comprises the step of basing said selecting of said advertisement on at least one previous  
3 conversation between the at least one character and the user.

1           65.    The method of claim 58 wherein the series of messages is delivered in a  
2    language that is selected based on at least one characteristic of the user.

1           66.    The method of claim 58 wherein said controlling the delivery of the series of  
2    messages as displayed text or audio output is based on at least one characteristic of the user.

1           67.    The method of claim 58 wherein the at least one character is presented only as  
2    audio output.

1           68.    The method of claim 58 wherein the at least one character is presented via a  
2    wireless device.

1           69.    The method of claim 58 wherein the at least one character is presented via a  
2    telephone.

1           70.    The method of claim 58 wherein the at least one character is a rendered  
2    character that is one of a cartoon character, a person, an animal, and a non-living object.

1           71.    The method of claim 58 wherein the computer system is a gaming device.

1           72.    The method of claim 58 wherein said controlling step comprises the step of  
2    sending the at least one character to convey the series of messages integrated with said  
3    selected advertisement from a server computer to a user computer via a communication link.

1           73.    The method of claim 58 wherein said presenting step comprises the step of  
2    displaying an image of the at least one character.

1           74.    The method of claim 58 wherein the conversation is with at least two of the at  
2    least one character.

1           75.    The method of claim 58 wherein the conversation is with the user.

1           76.    The method of claim 58 wherein the user participates interactively in the  
2 conversation with the at least one character.

1           77.    The method of claim 58 wherein the series of messages is delivered as audio  
2 output.

1           78.    The method of claim 58 wherein the series of messages is delivered as  
2 displayed text.

1           79.    The method of claim 78 wherein said displayed text is shown in a bubble near  
2 the displayed image of the at least one character.

1           80.    The method of claim 58 wherein said selecting an advertisement step  
2 comprises the step of basing said selecting of said advertisement on at least one advertising  
3 requirement.

1           81.    The method of claim 80 wherein said at least one advertising requirement is to  
2 present said selected advertisement during a certain percentage of user sessions.

1           82.    The method of claim 80 wherein said advertising requirement is to present  
2 said selected advertisement at a certain frequency.

1 83. A system for delivering advertising to a user, the system comprising:  
2 at least one server computer having an interface for communicating over a  
3 computer network to the user, said at least one server computer further comprising;  
4 an advertisement system contained within a computer usable medium  
5 having computer readable program code embodied therein, said advertisement  
6 system further comprising;  
7 an advertisement component for controlling the selection of an  
8 advertisement from a plurality of advertisements to be integrated in a  
9 message; and  
10 a conversation system for controlling the presentation of at least one  
11 character along with the delivery of said message integrated with said  
12 advertisement to the user.

1 84. The system according to claim 83 wherein said advertisement system  
2 further comprises:  
3 a user profile database for storing demographic information on a plurality of users  
4 and for storing an indication of said plurality of advertisements that have been delivered  
5 to said plurality of users.

1 85. The system according to claim 83 wherein said advertisement system  
2 further comprises:  
3 an advertiser profile database for storing characteristics of at least one advertiser,  
4 wherein said characteristics are at least a one of a fee structure, at least one character type  
5 an advertisement may be associated with, and criteria for displaying said advertisement.

1 86. The system according to claim 83 wherein said advertisement system  
2 further comprises:  
3 an advertisement database for storing said plurality of advertisements and for  
4 storing characteristics of said plurality of advertisements.

1           87. The system according to claim 83 wherein said advertisement system  
2 further comprises:

3           a character profile database for storing characteristics of said at least one  
4 character.

1           88. The system according to claim 83 wherein said advertisement system  
2 further comprises:

3           a conversation history database for identifying at least one type of message and at  
4 least one type of advertisement to be delivered to the user.

1           89. The system according to claim 83 wherein said advertisement system  
2 further comprises:

3           a web engine for receiving requests for Web pages from a plurality of users over  
4 said computer network, for forwarding said requests to said conversation system, for  
5 receiving generated Web pages from said conversation system, and for sending said  
6 generated Web pages through said interface over said computer network to said plurality  
7 of users.

1           90. The system according to claim 83 wherein said computer network is the  
2 Internet.

1           91.    A system for delivering advertising, the system comprising:  
2           at least one user computer running a browser application having access to at least  
3 one server computer via a communications link, said at least one user computer further  
4 comprising;  
5           a display device for presenting a character, wherein said character  
6 communicates a message having an advertisement integrated with said message  
7 received from said at least one server computer; and  
8           an input device for sending a response to said at least one server computer  
9 regarding said message having said integrated advertisement.

1           92.    The system according to claim 91 wherein said at least one user computer  
2 further comprises:

3           a speaker for displaying as audio output said message having an advertisement  
4 integrated with said message communicated by said character.

1           93.    The system according to claim 91 wherein said character is displayed on  
2 said display device as a rendered character that is one of a cartoon character, a person, an  
3 animal, and a non-living object.

1           94.    The system according to claim 91 wherein said at least one user computer  
2 is a gaming device.

1           95.    The system according to claim 91 wherein said message having an  
2 advertisement integrated with said message is displayed as text on said display device.